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Mr. Michael Powell, Chair
Federal Communications Commission
445 12St. S.W.
Washington, DCFederal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

Dear Mr. Powell:

Media Diversity

In the interest of democracy, media diversity should be a top priority for the Federal Communications Commission. Media concentration cripples democracy. The FCC should preserve, not weaken, the rule prohibiting cross ownership of newspapers **and** television stations in the same market.

Although the Internet offers access to much information, most Americans **still** receive their news from a handful of outlets. **Few** operations now gather original news. At the local level *the* question of concentration **is** most acute.

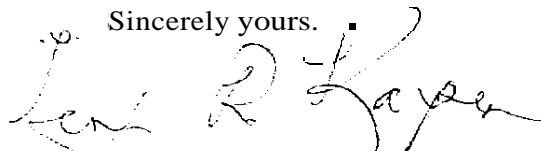
If ownership rules are eliminated, one or two companies in a town **would** have an effective monopoly on reaching consumers by being allowed to **control** the newspaper, radio and other outlets. **A monopoly on information would** reduce the diversity **of** cultural and political discourse in a community.

We already **know** that in radio, since the rules on ownership were relaxed in **1996**, the two largest companies now own *more* than 1400 *stations from* 130 **previously**.

An overhaul of the rules would benefit only the **large** corporations.

Since I cannot attend a hearing in Richmond, VA, next month, I *ask* that my comments be considered part of **the** hearing.

Sincerely yours.


(Mrs.) Leah R. Karpen